

# Cashier: eWIC Essentials



## What is eWIC?

eWIC is an electronic issuance system for WIC. Benefits are automatically added onto a card, similar to a debit card.

## Are SNAP and eWIC benefits on the same card?

No. SNAP and eWIC cards will be separate. SNAP cards have a specific dollar amount and eWIC cards will have specific WIC approved food items that the customer can purchase.

## How does eWIC work?

- ✓ WIC benefits are issued to the eWIC card at the local WIC clinic. The WIC customer's benefit balance includes all benefits that are available for purchase on their eWIC card. eWIC benefits have a start and end date.
- ✓ Foods are scanned at the cash register.
- ✓ The eWIC card is swiped by the customer and they enter their Personal Identification Number (PIN) to purchase WIC approved foods available in their benefit balance.
- ✓ Your cash register system will verify that the items are Alabama WIC approved and available in the benefit balance.
- ✓ WIC customer approves the transaction and pays any remaining balance. In a multi-tender transaction, the customer should always swipe their eWIC card first, then SNAP, then other forms of payment.

Store management will train you on how to conduct the eWIC transaction in your specific cash register system.

## How will the cashier verify the identity of the WIC customer?

In order to make an eWIC purchase, a WIC customer just needs their eWIC card and four-digit PIN. Only the WIC customer can enter their PIN. **NO** additional identification is required.

## Why isn't something ringing up for WIC?

It will be up to the cashier to help troubleshoot why an item isn't ringing up and help the customer with the best solution.

**There are four primary reasons an item may not ring up:**

1. The item is not Alabama WIC approved.
2. The item is WIC approved, but not in the Approved Product List (APL) and needs to be submitted to the State WIC Office.
3. The WIC customer has not been issued the WIC approved item.
4. The WIC customer has the benefit, but does not have enough of the benefit available to make the purchase.

Understanding these reasons will help you assist WIC customers in using their eWIC card. Always be polite and courteous when assisting WIC customers.

## Can cashiers override an item if it doesn't scan as WIC approved?

There are no overrides with eWIC. The APL is the authority on what items are Alabama WIC approved.

## How does a WIC customer know what they are allowed to purchase?

A shopping list is provided to the participant by the WIC clinic and their receipt from the last eWIC transaction lists their remaining balance.

Upon request of the WIC customer you are federally required to perform a balance inquiry for the WIC customer.

## Will there still be an Alabama WIC Approved Foods Brochure?

Yes, even though the APL controls what products customers can buy, the Alabama WIC Approved Foods Brochure is still an essential tool because it lists allowable types, brands, and sizes of products. Just like now, it should be used to troubleshoot when foods don't ring up as WIC approved and to help customers find the right foods.

## Does the participant have to separate their WIC foods?

At the majority of Alabama authorized WIC vendors, the WIC customer does not have to separate their foods. The cash register system will identify the WIC items using the product's UPC or PLU code and deduct them from the WIC customer's benefit balance.

## Do WIC customers have to buy all of their WIC food in one trip with eWIC?

No. WIC customers can purchase as much (or as little) as they want in a shopping trip.

## If an eWIC card is not swiping can a cashier manually enter the card number?

Yes, if the card isn't swiping for some reason, you can enter the card number manually. Manual entry is only allowed if the card is presented by the WIC customer.

## What happens if a WIC customer forgets their PIN?

If a WIC customer incorrectly enters their PIN three times, their card will lock and will not unlock until midnight. The WIC customer can also call the number on the back of their eWIC card.

## Can eWIC be used at self-checkout?

No, eWIC cannot be used at self-checkout, for home delivery, curbside pickup or any type of mobile payment.

## When will the Alabama WIC Program stop processing paper food instruments and cash-value vouchers?

The last WIC clinics convert to eWIC in August 2019, which means food instruments will be in circulation in some parts of Alabama through November 2019, due to the three-month issuance process.

All stores throughout the state are required to accept paper food instruments and cash value vouchers through the entire roll out process.



## Question about eWIC?

The Alabama WIC Program is here to make the transition to eWIC as easy as possible. Should you have any questions about eWIC, please send them to the following email address:

[alvendorwic@adph.state.al.us](mailto:alvendorwic@adph.state.al.us)

## eWIC updates

Additional information about eWIC can be found by visiting the Alabama eWIC page at:

[alabamapublichealth.gov/wic/ewic-vendors.html](http://alabamapublichealth.gov/wic/ewic-vendors.html)



[alabamapublichealth.gov/WIC](http://alabamapublichealth.gov/WIC)

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